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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9452  
INFO RUEHZH/HAITI COLLECTIVE  
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 2188  
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 0298  
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA 1936  
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO 2458  
RUEHMT/AMCONSUL MONTREAL 0371  
RUEHQ/AMCONSUL QUEBEC 1334  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC  
RUCOWCV/CCGDSEVEN MIAMI FL  
RUMIAAA/HQ USSOUTHCOM J2 MIAMI FL

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PORT AU PRINCE 000096

SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/CAR, DRL, S/CRS, INR/IAA  
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TREASURY FOR MAUREEN WAFER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/29/2019

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [HA](#)

SUBJECT: HAITI'S INTERIOR MINISTER WORRIED ABOUT ELECTIONS,  
SAYS HAITI TRAINING INTEL SERVICE

PORT AU PR 00000096 001.2 OF 002

Classified By: Ambassador Janet A. Sanderson. Reason: E.O. 12958 1.4  
(b), (d)

Summary

1. (C) During the Ambassador's January 21 call, Minister of Interior Paul-Antoine Bien-Aime informed that Haiti is creating an intelligence coordination body. He admitted that Haiti is vulnerable to movements of nationals from countries of concern. The country needs not an army but a national security force to complement the police, primarily to police Haiti's porous borders. The Minister worries that spoilers could create instability surrounding the April 19 Senate elections, that drug traffickers will increase their control over parliament, and that hurricane damage, hunger, and rising education costs are creating social pressures. He thought that mayors were learning their jobs, but that the structure of municipal government must be simplified. End Summary.

Intel Unit

2. (C) During the Ambassador's call on Minister of the Interior and Territorial Collectivities Paul-Antoine Bien-Aime in his office, she asked about Haitian plans to develop an intelligence capability beyond the unit in his own ministry (the Centre d'Information et de Coordination Conjoint - CICC) that focused primarily on drug crime. Bien-Aime said Haiti needed greater intelligence capability to keep track of threats from drugs and nationals of countries of concern entering Haiti. He recounted that recently 'a group' from the Middle East had flown to Haiti and left the airport without passing through immigration. They were later detained in Santo Domingo. This showed complicity of certain airport officials. Recently, a small group of Iraqi nationals was discovered in a hotel near the Cap Haitien airport. Two months ago, a number of Cubans were repatriated to Haiti from the Dominican Republic; from there they were apparently trying to get to the U.S. These incidents showed Haiti's vulnerability.

13. (C) The Minister went on to note that ever since the fall of the Duvaliers, Haiti has had no real intelligence service. The capability of foreign services in Haiti was limited. Former Prime Minister Jacques Edouard Alexis had supported creating a central office coordinating intelligence from various ministries, such as Economy/Finance and Interior. Bien-Aime supports that idea as does the President's security adviser, Bob Manuel. Besides the CICC and its drug crime focus, Haiti needed a general intelligence office that will provide the capability to "anticipate." Haiti is currently training eight officials to serve in that capacity.

#### Instability Surrounding Elections

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14. (C) Asked for his view of election preparations, Bien-Aime expressed confidence that the Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) had the organizational work well in hand. CEP General Director Pierre Louis Opont was doing good work, and would get the job done as long as financing was secure. Bien-Aime worried, however, that candidates and parties who fared poorly in the elections or anticipated doing so would organize disorder, perhaps even disrupting the elections. Parties now calculated that losing in April would put them out of all electoral contention until 2011. They are therefore putting everything that have into the April contests. (Note: It was not clear why the Minister did not take into account elections for the Chamber of Deputies and the next one-third of the Senate, which should take place late in 2009. End note.) Bien-Aime said he had discussed his security concerns with MINUSTAH, but they were more focused on working with the Haitian National Police (HNP).

#### Economic, Social Worries

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15. (C) The Minister expressed concern about Haiti's economic situation. Hurricane damage, hunger, and parents' running out of money to pay for their children's education by December all caused him concern. Last year, parents had generally not run into financial difficulty paying for school tuition until May. He hoped that the international community would continue "injecting food into the system" to reduce pressures on the poor. When the Ambassador said she perceived that political progress in Haiti seemed blocked, Bien-Aime agreed there was no "take-off" in Haiti because there was insufficient change to create hope. Political stability was threatened by the possibility of unrest in Les Cayes, Cap Haitien, and Gonaives.

#### The Drug Threat

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16. (C) Bien-Aime admitted that he had spent considerable time in parliament explaining his ministry's policies and budget. He expressed concern that drug traffickers would use the upcoming elections to "colonize" the legislature. Haiti could not simply exclude candidates suspected of links to drug trafficking. He noted there had been four landings of drug planes in the Northeast Department in December alone. Bien-Aime said that Haiti's drug police (BLTS) should be beefed up and its deployments in the Northeast increased. He expressed personal confidence in the Director of the BLTS. Elements in the police and judiciary were implicated in drugs.

#### Local Government Improving

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17. (C) When the Ambassador asked about the state of decentralization and local government, Bien-Aime said that Haiti still lacked a coherent policy on local government. Although Haiti's multi-level architecture of local government was complicated, on the practical level, mayors were making progress in learning their jobs. Municipalities needed more

and better-trained staff to build up administrative capability, especially in the area of finances and resource management. They also needed greater financing and more equipment. Asked whether the constitutional provisions defining local government should be amended, Bien-Aime said that Haiti should simplify local government structures. There should be one mayor per commune, not a mayor and two deputies as is currently the case. The ''sections'' into which communes were divided should be eliminated, and the mayor should have a single council as his executive arm. Port-au-Prince, however, should be divided into more communes.

18. (C) The Minister supported creating a national security force (''force publique''), but not an army, separate from Haiti's national police. Among its responsibilities would be policing the borders. He worried about cross-border tensions in Malpasse and Ouanaminthe, but was more concerned about the unpatrolled stretches of border between the four official crossing points to the Dominican Republic.

SANDERSON